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TO: Ron Carlee, County Manager **DRAFT**

FROM: Public Preparedness Planning Group
Jacqueline Snelling, Chair

STAFF: Clare Halsey, Fire Department

SUBJECT: Recommendations for the Structure for a Public Preparedness Council

ISSUE:

Whether to adopt the recommendations from the Public Preparedness Planning Group and appoint the Public Preparedness Council as proposed.

BACKGROUND:

On May 28, the County Manager announced the formation of a Public Preparedness Planning Group (PPPG) to develop recommendations for the structure of a public preparedness council.

The Manager directed specific work products include: mission, membership, scope, and an initial work plan with timelines. Further, recommendations should create a model program that is consistent with FEMA recommendations; enable the creation of a Public Preparedness Council (“Council”) by Labor Day; achieve new public preparedness procedures by the 2002/2003 winter storm season; and identify incremental improvements that can be made continuously.

The Public Preparedness Planning Group (PPPG) met throughout the summer and developed recommendations to meet the Manager’s charge.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Structure for Public Preparedness Council

Following are the PPPG recommendations for the Council mission, scope, organization and membership, and initial work plan. More detailed information on the work plan and timelines is included in the appendix.

I. Mission:

The PPPG recommends this mission statement:

The Public Preparedness Council will bring community leaders together to coordinate the involvement of community members in emergency preparedness

planning, mitigation, response and recovery. The Council will provide advice to the County Manager on the development and implementation of the County's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan to ensure that the Plan addresses the preparedness needs of all members of the community.

Emergencies include natural disasters, technological disasters, and civil strife or terrorist activity.

II. Objectives:

The five objectives are.

Coordination — The Council will ensure that all planning is coordinated and integrated with the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and regional plans (through the Emergency Planning Team) to provide an integrated public preparedness plan for Arlington. The Council will develop an integrated public relations plan — including media, brochures, and presentations — to promote all programs and activities across the community. The Council will establish a process to assess the effectiveness of its initiatives, particularly efforts to increase the awareness of the community and community participation. The Council will share its successes and lessons learned with other communities nationally.

Public Emergency Communication — The Council will involve the community in developing and testing plans to ensure that emergency communication strategies are designed to reach all members of the community — including people with hearing or visual impairments or with limited English proficiency — for foreseeable emergency situations.

Public Education for Emergency Preparedness — The Council will develop a public education plan that seeks to ensure that all members of the community understand emergency procedures and are prepared. It will help residents take an active role in protecting themselves and teach residents what to do in the case of a crisis.

Community Involvement and Volunteer Participation — The Council will develop and coordinate a volunteer initiative and community involvement program to support public emergency preparedness. The Council will plan and develop 1) volunteer and non-profit programs that mitigate and respond to emergencies, and 2) programs that effectively manage spontaneous volunteers during an emergency. The Council will spearhead efforts to promote current and new volunteer opportunities including Citizen Corps programs. The Council will match the needs of the first responders with the skills and abilities of volunteers.

Management of Community Resources for Disaster Response — The Council will identify community assets and develop systems to ensure that emergency planning and response makes effective use of all organizational and individual community resources including voluntary donations of personnel services, goods, and financial contributions.

III. Organization, Membership:

The PPPG recommends that the Council report to the County Manager and consist of a Coordinating Committee and four Task Groups corresponding to each of the identified

objectives. The Coordinating Committee and Task Groups will include members of the community who have special expertise and members who have special needs that require specific plans targeted to include them in planning, preparation and response to emergencies. Each Task Group will implement procedures for receiving and considering information from the public at large and from groups not identified for regular participation on the Council.

The Coordinating Committee and Task Groups will meet monthly. The Committee and Task Group Chairs may schedule additional meetings as needed.

The Coordinating Committee or Task Group Chairs may recommend additions to groups as appropriate. The Coordinating Committee may recommend changes in the Council organization to the Manager.

Members will be appointed for 3 years with 1/3 of the total being appointed each year after the initial 3 years (2005).

The PPPG requests that the following Arlington County departments provide direct support to the Council as needed: The Emergency Planning Team; Police; Fire; Human Services (many programs); Public Health; Public Works; Technical Services; Arlington Cable, Parks, Recreation and Community Resources; Community Housing, Planning & Development; and Libraries. The PPPG also requests that the Sheriff's Office and the Arlington Public Schools be invited to participate and provide support to the Council.

Council leadership: It is recommended that the Council leadership be provided by a Chair, a Vice Chair, and Task Group Chairs and Vice-Chairs, appointed by the County Manager with staff liaisons designated by the Manager.

Coordinating Committee: PPPG recommends that the Coordinating Committee be composed of the above listed Council leadership with at-large members appointed by the Manager from community groups to include the Red Cross, Civic Federation, Chamber of Commerce, Arlington business Partnerships, Emergency Medical Services Council, Disability Advisory Commission, Endependence Center, County Council of PTA's, multicultural representation, multilingual representation, and Local Emergency Planning Council.

The Coordinating Committee would be responsible for coordinating the work and recommendations of the Task Groups through the Deputy Coordinator of Emergency Services and the Emergency Planning Team. Staff leadership and representation from the County would be designated by the Manager.

Task Groups: PPPG recommends that the Task Groups be composed of a Chair and Vice Chair appointed by the County Manager with representatives from organizations identified as having expertise and interest in the Task Group area.

Staff leadership and representation from the County would be provided by CEMP Task Group staff and other staff designated by the Manager. The CEMP Communication Task Group would be the liaison for the Council Task Groups on Public Emergency Communication and Public Education for Emergency Preparedness. The CEMP Resources Task Group would be the liaison for the Council Task Groups on Community Involvement and Volunteer Participation, and Management of Community Resources for Disaster Response. In order to provide additional professional assistance, the PPPG

requests that Arlington Public Schools be asked to designate a staff liaison for the Council Task Group on Public Education for Emergency Preparedness.

In addition to the groups named below, the PPPG recommends extending opportunities to the institutions of higher education located within the County and to the Virginia Hospital Center to participate in the Council. Recommended group representatives by Task Group are:

Public Emergency Communication: Civic Federation, Disability Advisory Commission and Endependence Center, Media, Schools (PTA), Amateur Radio, Businesses (Partnerships and Chamber), Travel and Tourism Commission, Hispanic Committee of Virginia, utilities (phone company).

Public Education for Emergency Preparedness: Civic Federation, Red Cross, Schools (PTA, preschools), Hispanic Parents Association, Catholic Diocese, Disability Advisory Commission and Endependence Center, business Partnerships, Multicultural Advisory Commission, media, Commission on Aging, Community Services Board, Interfaith Council, Chamber of Commerce (public relations), Arlington Community Action Program, Tennant-Landlord Commission, Crisis Link.

Community Involvement and Volunteer Participation: Red Cross, United Way, Coalition of Arlington Agencies for Response and Recovery, Civic Federation, Interfaith Council, Salvation Army, Businesses (building engineers), business Partnerships, Leadership Arlington, Media, Partnership for Children, Youth and Families.

Management of Community Resources for Disaster Response: Chamber and business Partnerships, Interfaith Council, Leadership Arlington, United Way, Salvation Army, Arlington Food Assistance Center, Inter-Service Club Council, Civic Federation, Red Cross, EMS Council.

IV. Work plan: (see Appendix A)

The recommendations for the Council work plan include initial objectives and specific time frames. In order to achieve the Manager's charge of implementing new public preparedness procedures, the work plan identifies four tasks to be achieved by the end of December:

- Enhance emergency communication systems to the public (Communications)
- Ensure public awareness of emergency communications procedures (Communications)
- Provide the public with greater understanding on how to prepare for and respond to different emergency scenarios (Education)
- Provide coordination and support for Citizen Corps programs (Volunteer opportunities)

The remaining tasks are areas identified for incremental improvements that can be made continuously. The work plan recommends that these areas be reviewed by the appropriate Task Groups to produce recommendations for updating the work plan after December.

The Council will submit a report to the County Manager on the status of its work and any revisions to the work plan by mid January and a first annual report by June.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The PPPG has been advised that initial County support and resources will be provided as needed by current staffing and budgets. The Coordinating Committee will work with Task Groups to identify areas of the Council work that will need funding, to identify funding sources, and to develop proposals for funding.